



## DNR Reports . . . by Glenn Therres

Habitat loss is the principle cause for most of the species that have become endangered. Therefore, protection of habitat that supports endangered species is a tool employed by DNR and other agencies for the conservation of these species. Protection through acquisition or regulation of these habitats is one means of endangered species conservation. However, simply acquiring the land, locking it up, and walking away does not always protect the endangered species of concern. Many times, active management is needed to maintain the endangered population.

Habitat management has been actively conducted by wildlife biologists managing for game species since the 1930s. Waterfowl, quail, grouse, woodcock, etc. have benefitted from these habitat alterations. However, one rarely thinks of active habitat management in the context of endangered species conservation.

Endangered species that depend on early successional habitats and natural communities are especially at risk of disappearing if we simply "protect" the habitat through acquisition or regulation. These species need those early successional habitats to be maintained either naturally (if that option is still available) or by active habitat alteration.

A case in point occurs at Soldiers Delight Natural Environmental Area in Baltimore County. This area was acquired by DNR because of its unique natural communities and value for biodiversity conservation. It supports several state threatened and endangered species and over 90 percent of the global population of one federally endangered plant, sandplain gerardia.

Soldiers Delight is the largest remaining serpentine grassland in eastern North America. Serpentine grasslands or barrens are dominated by prairie-like vegetation, mainly little blue stem, Indian grass, asters, goldenrods, and several other wildflowers. A scattering of oaks occur in a savanna atmosphere. The plants that grow on serpentine barrens are specially adapted to nutrient-poor mineral soils. Serpentine soils have high levels of magnesium, which is toxic to most plant species.

Serpentine grasslands formerly occurred in a band stretching from Alabama to Canada, with the largest and most floristically distinctive ones located in southeastern Pennsylvania and northern Maryland. Tens of thousands of acres of this community once existed in this area prior to European settlement. Native Americans kept these grasslands free

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# THE MARYLAND YELLOWTHROAT

Newsletter of the Maryland Ornithological Society

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## MOS 2000: A Conference at the Gateway by Mike Callahan

While attending the Annual MOS Conference on May 19-21, 2000, members will enter the "Gateway to Western Maryland" for a birding adventure in the New Millennium.

This year's MOS Conference is being hosted by the Washington and Frederick County Chapters at the Ramada Conference Center in Hagerstown from May 19-21. The Conference Planning Committee (CPC) is pleased to announce that we will welcome a new century of conferences with a dinner speaker whose name is known to birders around the world. This year it is no other than our own Chan Robbins. The subject of his talk will be "Birds and Birding into the New Millennium", and should offer a new perspective on things to come.

Hagerstown is a new Conference location for MOS, and exciting trips plan to visit Washington and Frederick Counties, West Virginia and Pennsylvania for a variety of birds. Statewide Conference Chairman Mike Callahan and Local Coordinator Dave Weesner are working with a charged CPC to make your stay in Hagerstown one you will talk about for years to come. Many thanks go to retired chairman Lou DeMouy. Acting as my mentor, Lou has made my learning of and transition into the position smooth and successful.

Your comments from our 1999 Conference helped us to improve your enjoyment. We have a registration option to make all meals available this year. Many of your conference favorites, like the Silent Auction and Raffle, Research Paper presentations, Local Artist's Display, Tally Rally and the book/gift store will be available for your convenience. To donate items for the Silent Auction, contact Sybil Williams at 301-762-0560. Contact Sybil if you can donate a small amount of your time to greet auction visitors.

Please contact me at 301-490-9318 or Dave Weesner at 301-432-7718 with any questions you have about MOS 2000. Look for your registration flyer in this edition of *The Yellowthroat* and mail it immediately so you won't miss out. Join us and rekindle old birding friendships or make new ones for the years to come as you greet the Spring in Hagerstown.

## Chapter Chatter

by  
Martha Waugh

**In Memoriam**—Dr. Mildred Gebhard, a member of the Harford County chapter from 1968 to 1999, passed away on October 4 at Harford Memorial Hospital. Born in 1918 in Delaware, she received her doctorate degree from the University of Pennsylvania in the 1950's. She taught in the psychology department at the University of Pennsylvania and worked as a psychologist at the Perry Point VA Medical Center for 35 years. She served as chairperson of the MOS scholarship program for many years. She enjoyed birdwatching and until recently regularly attended club meetings and field trips. She will be missed. A donation to the MOS Scholarship fund was made in her memory.

**Crash Takes Kent Chapter Member**—The Kent Chapter was saddened by the loss of one of its members. Dr. John W. Schelpert and his wife, Joann, were killed in the crash of the EgyptAir flight 990. John joined MOS two years ago when he moved to Chestertown. He was an enthusiastic birder who enjoyed the bountiful birds in the area. Chapter members will miss John's humor and expertise.

**Caroline Chapter Honors Member**—The Caroline Chapter and MOS has hung a plaque dedicated to Edwin Unger in the Irish Grove house. It contains his photograph and the

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## 17<sup>th</sup> Annual World Series of Birding: MOS Goes For It Again

by Norm Saunders



For the second year in a row, the Maryland Ornithological Society (MOS) sent a team to the 1999 World Series of Birding (WSB). From midnight to midnight, Saturday May 15, 1999, our team participated in birdathon history. For twenty-four windy hours, the Maryland Yellowthroats, as the team is called, birded New Jersey's Cape May County hotspots looking for as many species as possible. Led by captains Hal Wierenga and Lynn Davidson, and joined by elite Maryland birders Mark Hoffman and Marshall Iliff, the team tallied 178 species to place 10<sup>th</sup> overall and 1<sup>st</sup> in the Cape May County competition! In the 16 years of the WSB, this is only the second team sponsored by a nonprofit organization to win a trophy—the first was the team sponsored by the Delaware Valley Ornithological Club way back in 1985.

If you missed all the fun and excitement of last year's competition, plan to join us on May 13, 2000! Once again, MOS will sponsor a WSB team of Maryland's finest birders. Corporate and individual supporters are needed to help make this a successful event. Let's talk a bit about the team and about the WSB and how you can ensure the success of this effort.

Why are we sponsoring this team? First, for the sheer joy of rooting for the home team in the premier competitive birding event in the United States. Second, and just as critical, to raise money from donations and pledges to support the on-going Education, Research, and Sanctuary programs of the Society, programs that contribute to the environmental well-being of the State of Maryland. MOS grossed over \$4,000 and cleared just about \$2,000 after expenses. The 1998 contributions funded a Mist Net Replacement Program, administered by the Research Committee, and allowed our Scholarship Committee to send an additional Maryland educator to Audubon Ornithology Camp. The Board of Directors has already voted to fund an additional scholarship again in 2000, from the 1999 WSB profits, and other worthy educational and environmental causes will be considered for the balance of the funds.

How can you contribute? Well, we are soliciting pledges and donations from members and other individuals interested in our work. Last year we outfitted our team with team baseball caps and, thanks to a few extraordinary donors, with handsome windbreakers, as well. We are also looking for business supporters. All income from donations and pledges will go to support the on-going Education, Research, and Sanctuary programs of the Society. Most importantly, since the Maryland Ornithological Society is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, all of your donations are fully tax-deductible.

### How MOS Members and Chapters Can Help Support the MD Yellowthroats

- Make an individual pledge or fixed contribution.
- Ask your chapter to make a pledge or fixed contribution.
- Solicit pledges and fixed contributions from friends, neighbors and family members.
- Talk to neighborhood businesses, that may be interested in supporting the program. Remember to tell them that major supporters receive free advertising on our MOS State Web Site.

## MOS 2000 World Series of Birding Pledge Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ My contribution of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to the MOS World Series of Birding Team is enclosed.

\_\_\_ I want to make a "Windbreaker Pledge!" Here is my check for \$100!

\_\_\_ My pledge of \$\_\_\_\_\_ per species seen (expected to range between 150 and 200 species, we will contact you with the actual count by May 31).

Please mail this pledge form (and your check made payable to the Maryland Ornithological Society if you are making an outright contribution) to: Norm Saunders, MOS President, 1261 Cavendish Drive, Colesville, MD 20905-7030. Pledges may also be submitted to Norm via e-mail at: [osprey@ari.net](mailto:osprey@ari.net)

### THE MARYLAND YELLOWTHROAT Newsletter of the Maryland Ornithological Society, Inc.

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If you have a change of address or are experiencing difficulties with MOS mailings, contact the Mailing List Coordinator, William Guion, 8007 Martown Road, Laurel, MD 20723, (301) 490-0444.

All other questions regarding the Maryland Ornithological Society should be referred to the Executive Secretary, Larry Fry, 1202 Ridge Rd., Pylesville, MD 21212, (410) 452-8539 or at (800) 823-0050 (410-452-5611 in the Bel Air calling area). Larry's e-mail address is: [jlry@netfox.net](mailto:jlry@netfox.net)

For information on advertising rates and deadlines, contact the editor.

Copy deadlines for the March/April 2000 issue are:

March-May Calendar Activities:  
 January 25, 2000

All Other Submissions:  
 February 1, 2000



## DNR Reports . . .

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of woody vegetation by burning them for hunting purposes, thus maintaining early successional species. When Europeans eliminated large-scale frequent fires, the grassland areas were replaced by woodland. Some areas were kept in grasslands by settlers for grazing livestock. With the removal of livestock from the serpentine areas around 1930, the loss of grasslands greatly accelerated. Houses and development have claimed most of the serpentine grasslands in this area now.

Succession of the grasslands to Virginia pines has become the major threat to the remaining open areas on Soldiers Delight. Active habitat management is needed to restore and maintain this unique natural community and the endangered species that depend on it. A management plan was developed that calls for the large-scale removal of pines and periodic burning of the grasslands. The management of this is being accomplished through a collaborative effort between a few DNR agencies, namely the Park Service, Forest Service, and Wildlife and Heritage Division. Lots of volunteers are also helping with the restoration of this sensitive area.

Over the past four years we have been cutting and girdling pine trees in an effort to increase the acreage of open grasslands. Because of the sensitivity of the area, all of this is done by hand, not by typical timber harvest techniques. The larger pines were hauled off and chipped so as not to increase the organic layer with their decomposition. Restoring the grasslands to mineral soil conditions is the goal.

Prescribed burning is also being used to expand and maintain the grassland conditions. Controlled burning reduces the accumulation of organic materials, namely the decomposing plant matter, thus maintaining mineral soil conditions. Burning also helps control woody vegetation. This past November, 100 acres were burned under controlled conditions by DNR personnel and volunteers in cooperation with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's fire crew from Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge. This was the second large controlled burn conducted on the area in the past three years. More are being planned. The ultimate goal is to restore the serpentine grasslands to its former prairie-like conditions and maintain the natural communities with periodic controlled fires.

This level of intensive habitat management does not sound like the typical strategy for endangered species conservation. But for many endangered plants and animals this is exactly what is needed and we hope to expand such restoration efforts in Maryland to maintain our state's biodiversity.

## Chapter Chatter

(continued from page 1, column 3)

following inscription: "In memory of Vernon Edwin Unger, Senior, and in gratitude for his many contributions to The Maryland Ornithological Society, 1907-1999, Life Member, President 1965-1971, Sanctuary Chair 1971-1976 A man with a keen intellect, a love of birds and nature, an insatiable curiosity, and a respect for all living creatures." (ed. note: see the plaque and photograph on page 6 of this issue)

**Allegany Introduces Young People to Nature**—Chuck Hager, Pam Hager, and Betsy Harrison, all members of the Allegany County Chapter, put together the fourth annual nature camp at the MOS wildlife sanctuary Carey Run in beautiful Garret County. The overnight camp was originally started in the sixties, with a hiatus for some twenty years until it was reorganized and reinstated by some of the original campers. Ken Hodgdon was one of the founders. The purpose of the camp is to initiate the campers to the ecology of western Maryland. Some of the speakers who so generously donated their time and talents were: Jon Boone, Kevin Dodge, Bill Devlin, Roy Brown, Bob Twigg, Vicki Teats, Bruce Taliaferro, and Ron Hughes. The campers work on a project each year and this year it was an arboretum trail. They identified 65 species of birds during the week and learned over 25 bird calls. The campers also worked on original skits about what they learned for a presentation to parents and friends at the end of the camp. One skit was performed at the Chapter's annual picnic. Contributions of time, money, and food were made by local businesses and Allegany Chapter members.

**Toppled Towers of Annapolis**—Three 300-foot-tall radio towers crashed in seconds on Saturday, November 13 at Greenbury Point at the Naval Academy in Annapolis. The 16 red-and-white steel towers, long an instant recognition point in the area, were built in 1918 to provide communications to military ships. John Schorpp, an Anne Arundel Chapter member, is responsible for maintaining and managing the radio towers and watching the 20 or more Osprey nests in the towers. John was recognized by the Anne Arundel Chapter's 1996 Conservationist of the Year Award for his work with the Ospreys and his conservation efforts at the Greenberry Point facility. All but three small towers will be brought down, but the Naval Academy officials have promised they will maintain the refuge as an environmental preserve.

**Montgomery Awards to Students**—Using money from the Claudia Wilds Fund, the Montgomery County Chapter will award \$50 and \$100 gift certificates for outstanding wild-bird-related entries in the Montgomery Area Science Fair to interest middle and high school students in wild birds and the protection of bird habitat. Michael Bowen, Sam Freiberg, Jane Hill, Barbara Holloman, Bill Kulp, Donald Messersmith, Naomi Ulmer, and Frank Witebsky have volunteered to serve as mentors in helping students define possible projects.

**Hawk Watching in the City**—Kevin Graff, now 21 has been a Baltimore Bird Club member since he was 14, and he is a devoted hawk watcher from his home on White Avenue in Baltimore. Kevin has a 90 percent hearing loss but he has no problem seeing birds, especially hawks. He reports hawk flight information to MOS and to a University of Arizona network tracking migration patterns throughout the country. Kevin was featured in an October 20 article of the Baltimore Sun, including pictures and a map showing his home area. Peter Webb, Peter Lev, and Elliot Kirschbaum, all MOS members, are quoted as admirers of Kevin's prowess in spotting and counting large numbers of hawks. On September 18, he spotted nearly 7,000 hawks between 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. Kevin's ambition is to become a Baltimore Zoo aviary keeper. In addition, his dream is to turn 5 acres of undeveloped land in his area into a bird-watching sanctuary, complete with a tower for hawk-watching. Such a sanctuary located near the Atlantic flyway called the "I-95 corridor" would cost some \$250,000. Having overcome his hearing obstacle, who's to say he can't realize his dream?

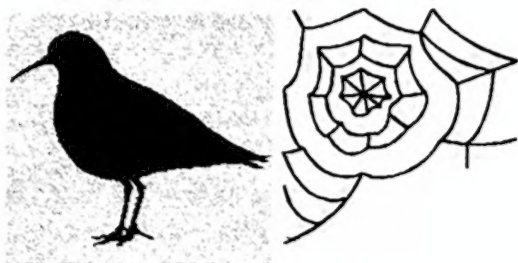
**Cecil County Spotlights Outstanding Contributors**—At the September meeting, president Leslie Fisher recognized members who had contributed significantly to the club. Ron Kelczewski, master builder and creator of the Hawk Watch Interpretive Sign at Turkey Point was presented in absentia with a copy of Ken Kauffman's *Kingbird Highway*. Scott Powers, also not present, was given chickadee coasters and a message pad in recognition of his excellent service as Field Trip Chair. Ken Drier received several bird mugs in recognition of his production of the *Cecil Bird Life* newsletter. Marcia Whitmyer took home a shrub from Kollars Nursery of Harford County in recognition for her work as webmaster of the club website and the hawk watch website. In a later edition of *Cecil Birdlife*, Leslie paid tribute to the continuing beyond-the-call-of-duty contributions of her husband, Harry.

**Recruiting and Welcoming New Members**—Montgomery and Cecil Chapters welcome new members in their newsletters. Most recently, Cecil saluted new members: Nuala Carpenter, Harold and Ramona Cook, Frank Fawlings, Julius Meisel, Brian Moyer and Marilyn Garcia and Montgomery recognized Robert and Judith Field, Linda Carruthers, and Brooks Browne. Montgomery's New Members Chair is Cyndie Loper who makes sure member name tags are available and visible and that each new member receives a letter of welcome from her. It's

(continued on page 10, column 1)



## Birds on the Web



From time to time, people have asked me about the contents of the MOS Web Site. Many members don't immediately realize how much information we have made available and are surprised when we give them a "guided tour." We decided it was time to "toot our own horns," so to speak and so, for the next few issues of *The Yellowthroat*, then, we will take all of you on a personal tour of the site. If you want to follow along as you read this, then first point your browser to:

<http://www.MDBirds.org/>

We start from the home page itself. Here you will find an index to the most recently added material, as well as links to the major subsections of the Site. Via graphic icons you can reach prominent areas that are often accessed. The icons will often take to you pages that cannot be accessed in other ways, although most areas on the Site can be reached in at least two ways.

The main graphic on the site which appears at the top of the page is a collage of the title text. There are inserts for Maryland birds, plants and flowers. Did you recognize our President stooping over his Questar? This is a decorative piece. Go ahead, click on it.....it won't take you anywhere. The green buttons to the left of the main graphic are an important navigational aid. These will take you to other indexes, and we'll explore them further next time. But if you feel adventurous, go ahead and click away.

The "What's New" section follows. Listed here are the most recently added / revised pages on the site. The listings are usually self explanatory. Occasionally, "special" items which are timely and will not be permanently added to the site, are reachable only from the home page. Therefore, you should check this list carefully for any items of interest to you. Items that become permanent additions to the site will not disappear when they are no longer noted on the home page. You can find these under the appropriate subject index, which we will review for the next issue.

Scroll down past "What's New." Here is the beginning of our specialty icons. On the far left you will find *BirdReporter*, *BirdFinder* and the *MD Birding Quiz*. *Reporter* tells you how and where to report rare bird sightings, *Finder* is a developing section on some of the more uncommon Maryland species and where they can be found in the State, and *Quiz* features photos of prominent Maryland bird locations, along with a series of questions to challenge your knowledge of field trip locales throughout the State.

Moving over to the right, click on the *MDPIF* icon to visit the *Maryland Partners In Flight* Web Site. Hit the miniature sanctuary sign and find out all about registering your backyard or other property as an MOS sanctuary! The last icon in this row will take you to a page highlighting the premier shorebirding locations in Maryland. There is

## Navigating the MOS State Web Site: Part I by Fran Saunders

a bit of room left for a last icon on this row. This is for our new section on *Birding in DC*, which we hope will be unveiled shortly after the New Millennium, if not before.

Now move on to the bottom row of icons. Click on the *BirdLinks* icon to review links to information about a variety of ornithological topics. At the top of the list is a section devoted to MOS chapters. The links we mention in this column are added to the list after each *Yellowthroat* is published to give you a quick and easy way to navigate. Although most of the information on the MOS Web Site is compiled and produced by MOS, all of the links on this page will take you outside the site. Now check out the *Press Room* icon. Here are the press releases for the current year. You can download them in Adobe pdf format or read them online. If you don't have an Adobe Acrobat Reader to view these files, you can download one from Adobe free of charge by clicking on the "Get Adobe Acrobat Reader" graphic toward the bottom of the page. The last icon is for our *Site Map*. We'll come back to this one at the end of our tour.

The next row spotlights our *World Series of Birding* sponsors, and the last row sports our "masthead" as well as some very useful icons. The top icon on the left will take you to the *MDOsprey* archives. *MDOsprey* is an online discussion list about birds and birding in Maryland. The archives contain each and every message distributed by the list. You can scroll down to view the latest topics or research the entire list for an item of interest. Below the *MDOsprey* icon are a series of links associated with the National Birding Hotline Cooperative (NBHC) and the national birds and birding discussion list *BirdChat*. Follow the *BirdChat* link to the most recent messages, and the NBHC links to the rare bird reports for particular areas of the country. This is where you will find all the online and transcribed hotline reports for the Lower 48. The reports come to you directly from NBHC so they are available to you as soon as they are posted. The last item in this section is a link to Jack Siler's *birdmail* page. *Birdmail* provided links to the archives of other bird discussion lists, such as *MDOsprey* and *BirdChat*. Unfortunately, Jack's site has been experiencing technical difficulties. The page has not been updated in a long time and I am actively seeking another alternative.

Had enough for one day? All right, then. We'll be back next time to review the subject matter indices that provide you with gateways to the remainder of the site.

Note: Our thanks to Hank Kaestner for sending along a postcard of the Saunders' Gull from Hong Kong! He notes that world population of our namesake is only about 600, making it one of the rarest in the world. This was lifer number #6163 for Hank. Wow!!!



## CARA Moving Through the House; Teaming With Wildlife Makes Progress!

by Edith Thompson, MD DNR



The Conservation Connection

In a truly synergistic session of the House Resources Committee, an amended version of the Conservation and Reinvestment Act (CARA) was passed in 37-12 vote. From here, the bill (still H.R. 701) will be reported to the House floor and will be voted on by the entire House of Representatives, probably in February or March of 2000. Congressmen Gilchrest and Wynn and Congresswoman Morella are co-sponsors of the new House version of CARA. Constituents, please encourage Congressmen Cummings, Ehrlich, Cardin, Bartlett, and Hoyer to co-sponsor CARA. The House will accept new co-sponsors for CARA until early January, when Congress reconvenes.

The new House version of CARA includes 7 titles and commits up to \$2.8 billion of the \$4 billion in federal revenue from Outer-Continental Shelf (OCS) oil and gas activity. Each title has a flat amount, each of which would decline proportionately if OCS revenue declines. The intent of the bill is to supplement and increase state programs, not to substitute funding for existing programs. States must maintain current funding for eligible programs in order to be eligible to receive new CARA funds.

### **Title I: Impact Assistance and Coastal Conservation \$1 billion**

This is funding for coastal and Great Lake states for a variety of coastal living resource programs and programs that are part of a state's Coastal Zone Management Plan. Maryland's share would be up to \$15.5 million/year.

### **Title II: Land and Water Conservation Fund Revitalization \$900 million**

Provides 50% in federal land acquisition funds and 50% grants to states for acquisition and facilities and programs on public lands. Federal purchases under condition of willing seller requirement, due consideration to land exchanges and easements, appropriate public notification, and submission to Congress of final Environmental Impact Statement with acquisition request.

### **Title III: Wildlife Conservation and Restoration \$350 million**

Most of the Teaming With Wildlife proposal included. For all fish and wildlife species; conservation, education and recreation programs. Allows projects to be implemented through grants to other agencies and nonprofit conservation organizations. State plan must include public participation.\*

### **Title IV: Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Program Amendments \$125 million**

Provides direct federal grants to urban government agencies, which could be transferred to other agencies or non-profit organizations. For rehabilitation of critically needed urban park lands and facilities.

### **Title V: Historic Preservation Fund \$100 million**

Provides funds for preservation of endangered National Historic Registered sites.

### **Title VI: Federal and Indian Lands Restoration \$200 million**

Provides funding for restoring and protecting resources that are threatened with degradation, resource protection, maintenance activities related to resource protection and to protect public health and safety of federal and Indian lands.

### **Title VII: Conservation Easements and Endangered and Threatened Species Recovery**

Provides funding for permanent conservation easements to state and local governments, Indian tribes, and nonprofit conservation organizations. Also provides financial assistance to landowners for implementation of recovery plans for federally endangered and threatened species and their habitats.

The full text and summaries of the new House CARA can be accessed at the House Resources Committee website: <http://www.house.gov/resources/ocs>. This is truly an historic and visionary bill! Be sure to make your voice heard.

The Senate did not move on their version of OCS Revenue Sharing Bills, CARA (S. 25) and Resources 2000 (S. 446), during this past session. The Senate may attempt to combine the two bills, as was done in the House, through the Energy and Natural Resources Committee or may simply adopt the House version of CARA for a Senate floor vote in the spring of 2000. Maryland's Senator Barbara Mikulski is a co-sponsor of both bills. Senator Paul Sarbanes is a co-sponsor of Resources 2000. Be sure to write to Maryland's Senators, encouraging them to work with the Energy and Natural Resources Committee on a combined bill or to support the House version of CARA if it is adopted by the Senate.

**Heads Up!** A national Teaming With Wildlife Rally is being planned for late February-early March. Plan to be there! It promises to be a fun way to show your support for permanent, long-term funding for fish and wildlife programs. Contact Tom Franklin at (301) 897-9770 for more information.

\*Note: On November 18, the Maryland Teaming With Wildlife Coalition received recommitment from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources to a 1997 memorandum of understanding in which the DNR agrees to work with the Coalition to develop a fair and equitable public participation process to determine priority uses of new fish and wildlife funding.

For more information the status of the OCS Revenue Sharing Bills and the Teaming With Wildlife effort, contact Tom Franklin, above, or Edith Thompson at (410) 260-8555.



## The 2nd C& O Canal Mid-Winter Bird Survey: Birders Needed by Peter Vankevich

On January 23, 2000, the Maryland-D.C. Audubon Council and the Maryland Ornithological Society, will conduct the Second Annual C&O Canal National Historical Park Mid-Winter Bird Survey. In the landmark First Annual Survey on January 22, 1999 despite cold, rainy weather down river and ice and snow on the towpath upriver, 80 observers reported 89 species and tallied 14,411 individuals. 74% of the entire 184 miles was covered in the survey. Highlights from last year included 17 Eastern Phoebe's, a flock of 156 Rusty Black birds, a Black-crowned Night Heron, a well-described Osprey and 136 Pileated Woodpeckers. The highest number of individuals for a species was 3678 Canada Geese. On the other end, only 1 Common Grackle was reported and whereas 179 White-breasted Nuthatches were reported there was not a single Red-Breasted Nuthatch, a fact that helped confirmed that this species was just not in the region last winter. The methodology used is based on the Christmas Bird Counts and Mid-Winter Bird Surveys for the state of Maryland.

The Surveys will provide valuable information on the resident wintering birds; not just which species are present but their abundance relative to specific measured miles of the towpath. This knowledge will help to identify key areas of concentration—a valuable tool for environmental monitoring and for improving habitat management within the park. Over time, as year-to-year survey data is accumulated, long term trends in the numbers of birds can be tracked and, because birds are sensitive to changes in their habitat, population declines serve as warnings of problems before it's too late to act.

We have a special request for experts in chickadee identification to cover miles 114 to 136 (Washington County) on the tow path since this is a transition zone and was the one area that did not get coverage in the first survey.

To volunteer, contact Peter Vankevich, preferably by email or telephone at (202) 547-4523. All participants will receive the data report broken down mile by mile.

In memory of  
Norman Edwin (Ned) Benson  
and in gratitude for his many contributions to  
The Maryland Ornithological Society  
1987 - 1999  
Life Member  
President 1985 - 1991  
Sanctuary Chair 1971 - 1976



A man with a warm smile, a love of birds  
and nature, an irrefutable curiosity, and a  
support for all living creatures.

## OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Announcing Publication of a New Raptor Journal International Hawkwatcher (ISSN 1527-0319)

Here Are Some Advance Publication Details

- Issued once or twice per year
- Articles and notes are original and previously unpublished
- A Short Notes section contains unusual raptor observations
- A source of raptor information not available elsewhere
- Worldwide geographic coverage
- At least one full length paper is in each issue
- Topics may include hawk migration, roosting, feeding, nesting, other behavior, or other topics
- Price \$12.50 per issue postpaid in USA

To order a copy of issue No. 1, send a check to D. S. Heintzelman, 629 Green St., Allentown, PA 18102. Note that there is an extra \$7.50 per issue shipping charge for mailing subscriptions to foreign nations.

To help pay printing costs involved in publishing International Hawkwatcher, sponsor advertisements are being accepted for inclusion in the journal. The following are the types and costs of advertisements for one issue to have sponsor advertisements printed.

Business cards (standard size, with or without line drawings, but NO photos) are accepted for sponsor advertisements from private persons, bird clubs, hawk watch sites, non-profit organizations, and businesses and companies. They will be printed same size (a black border may be placed around them), with several on the same sponsor advertisement page.

Larger size advertisements (NO photos) can be submitted camera ready from a commercial artist, or especially created on a computer for this use. Contact me for details and specifications. Full page size is 8½x11 inches.

Payment in full must be included with submission of a business card or camera ready advertisement copy. No refunds will be allowed, even if you decide later to cancel the advertisement.

- Normal Size Business Card (reproduced same size): \$25.00
- Half Page Sponsor Ad (camera ready; no photos): \$75.00
- Full Page Inside (camera ready; no photos): \$125.00
- Full Page Inside Back Cover (camera ready; no photos): \$150.00
- Full Page Outside Back Cover (camera ready; no photos): \$200.00

Editor and Publisher:

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### India Bird Trip

To gain the benefit of group rates, I am seeking ten people to join me on a professionally-guided bird tour in India in Nov/Dec, 2000. The projected cost for three weeks in India for all hotels, meals, transportation, park and guide fees, is US\$1,700 each. This does not include international air fare. Itinerary will include Corbett National Park, a tiger reserve, and India's famous bird reserve at Bharatpur. Contact George Kinter, 121 Hesketh Street, Chevy Chase, MD 20815 (e-mail <gkinter@bellatlantic.net>) for trip description and full itinerary.



## MOS Activities Calendar

(continues from Page 12, column 2)

### Thursday, January 13

MEETING. Howard. "Landbird Survey at Aberdeen Proving Ground," by Jim McCann, Maryland DNR. Programs are held at Longfellow Elementary School, 5470 Hesperus Dr., Columbia. Hospitality session and club bookstore at 7:30 p.m. Meeting/program begins at 8:00 p.m. For further information contact Mike Kerwin at 410-461-2408.

MEETING. Montgomery. "Living on the Wind: Across the Hemisphere With Migratory Birds," based on his new book by author, hawk-bander Scott Weidensaul. 7:30 p.m. at the Potomac Presbyterian Church, 10301 River Road, Potomac, MD. For further information, contact Linda Friedland at 301-983-2136 or by email at linnet@erols.com.

### Friday-Monday, January 14-17

FIELD TRIP. Montgomery. North Carolina Outer Banks. Wintering ducks, geese, swans and shorebirds, loons, gannets. Search also for less common gulls. Reservations required. Limited to 14 people. Jim Green will co-lead. For reservations, trip and motel information, contact the leader, Frank Witebsky, at 301-871-7990.

### Saturday, January 15

FIELD TRIP. Washington. Looking for Winter Birds. We'll go where the birds have been spotted. Last year it was wonderful views of Snow Buntings, Lapland Longspurs and Horned Larks at Oland Road. Meeting place and time to be determined. Contact the leader, Dave Weesner, at 301-432-7718 for more information.

### Sunday, January 16

FIELD TRIP. Baltimore. Conowingo Dam. Thousands of gulls, possibly some rarities, as well as waterfowl, raptors and eagles. Wear warm clothing and boots. Telescopes useful. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the White Marsh Mall at light pole 16 on NE side of Sears. For further information, contact the leader, Gene Scarpulla, at 410-821-0575.

FIELD TRIP. Talbot. Conowingo Dam for possible rare gulls, raptors and waterfowl. Joint trip with the Baltimore Chapter. The leader will be Gene Scarpulla. Meet at 7:00 a.m. at the parking lot in front of the Acme in the Tred Avon Shopping Center in Easton. For further information contact Wayne Bell at 410-820-6002.

### Saturday, January 22

FIELD TRIP. Cecil. Cecil Waterfowl. Meet at 8:00 am at the North East Plaza Acme Parking Lot. 1/2 day. For further information, contact the leader, Leslie Fisher, at 410-658-2427.

FIELD TRIP. Montgomery. Conowingo Dam. Wintering waterbirds, particularly gulls. Gull workshop attendees particularly welcome! No reservations needed, but contact leader or Mike Bowen (301-530-5764) for directions to dam site in Harford County. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at the base of the dam in front of the pavilion and bathrooms. Bring scope and lunch, warm drinks. Car pooling from Montgomery County encouraged. Gene Scarpulla may co-lead. For further information, contact the leader, Les Eastman, at 410-734-6969.

### Sunday, January 23

FIELD TRIP. Anne Arundel. Annapolis Neck & Thomas Point, A. A. County. Flocks of waterfowl and socializing over soup. Meet at 12:00 noon at the Bay Ridge Shop. For further information, contact the leaders, John & Helen Ford at 410-267-8417.

### Monday, January 24

MEETING. Tri-County. "Helping Your Records Committee Document Rarities" presented by Paul O'Brien. Meet 7:00 p.m. at the Asbury Methodist Church in the Fox Room. For further information contact Allen Deward, at 410-352-5590.

### Tuesday, January 25

MEETING. Washington. Potluck at 6:30 p.m. and meeting at 7:30 p.m. at the Mt. Aetna Retreat & Nature Center. Bring a covered dish to share. Robert McCutcheon has had a life-long interest in butterflies and traveled extensively to see them. He will share his experiences with us. For further information contact Janet Shields at 301-416-7109.

### Saturday, January 29

FIELD TRIP. Anne Arundel. Conowingo Dam, Harford County. A variety of gulls and other birds. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Severna Park Park & Ride lot located in the NW corner at the intersection of Jones Station Road and Ritchie Highway. For further information, contact the leader, Peter Hanan at 410-721-2658.

FIELD TRIP. Montgomery. Occoquan Bay NWR, Prince William Co., VA — 1/2-3/4 day. This new, 644-acre refuge offers strong concentrations of wintering waterfowl, raptors, and landbirds in mixed marsh, field, riparian, and woodland habitat. We may also visit nearby Mason Neck NWR in the afternoon. Meet at 9:00 am in the refuge parking lot. Bring lunch and a scope. Reservations are not required. However, call the leader to determine trip status in the event of inclement weather. For further information and directions, contact the leader, Howard Elitzak, at 703-575-8418.

FIELD TRIP. Tri-County. Coastal Birding: Cape Henlopen to Ocean City. Meet 7:30 a.m. at the Asbury Methodist Church in the east parking lot. For further information contact the leader, Sam Dyke, at 410-742-5497

### Tuesday, February 1

MEETING. Baltimore. Paul O'Brien will speak on the function and procedures of the MD/DC Records Committee. He will also show slides of some of the most spectacular records and show how a rarity should be written up. 7:30 p.m. at Cylburn Mansion. The Mansion is located off Greenspring Avenue one block south of Northern Parkway (accessible from I-83 Northern Parkway exit south of the Beltway) in Baltimore.

### Wednesday, February 2

MEETING. Carroll. "Breeding Surveys of Canada Geese in Arctic Canada" by Bill Harvey of Maryland DNR. 7:30 p.m. at Carroll Community College, Westminster, MD. For more information, contact Laura Tarbell at 410-857-1109.

### Thursday, February 3

MEETING. Frederick. Birding in Ecuador and Costa Rica with Beth Zang & Linda Keller, our traveling duo. 7:30 p.m. at Frederick High School in the Music Room.

### Friday, February 4

MEETING. Anne Arundel. "Amphibians of Maryland" by Sam Drogie. 8:00 p.m. at the DNR Conference Room, Tawes Building, corner of Taylor Avenue and Rowe Boulevard, Annapolis.

(continued at top of next page)



**Saturday, February 5**

**FIELD TRIP.** Baltimore. New Design Road and Lilypons. For Horned Larks, Lapland Longspurs, sparrows and hawks. Telescopes useful. Some walking in exposed, cold, windy fields; wear warm clothing and boots. Meet 8:00 a.m. at the Security Boulevard Park & Ride at the east end of I-70. For further information, contact the leader, Pete Webb, at 410-486-1217.

**FIELD TRIP.** Frederick. Local Hot Line Birds. Wander the area hot spots to see who's here or near here. Maybe a rare gull at Conowingo. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Culler Lake Boathouse (2<sup>nd</sup> Street just west of College Terrace). For further information, contact Wilbur Hersberger at 301-898-9088.

**FIELD TRIP.** Montgomery. Ocean City to Broadkill Marsh. Wintering waterfowl, gulls, terns, shorebirds. Meet 8:30 a.m. at Ocean City Inlet parking lot. Bring scope, food and warm drinks. Reservations required. For further information, contact the leader, John Bjerke, at 301-963-8525.

**FIELD TRIP.** Talbot. Coastal trip to see Harlequin and other ducks, winter finches (maybe a crossbill or two). Meet at 7:00 a.m. at the parking lot in front of the Acme in the Tred Avon Shopping Center in Easton. For further information contact the leader, Wayne Bell, at 410-820-6002.

**Sunday, February 6**

**FIELD TRIP.** Montgomery. Owling in Southern Frederick County. Evening trip. We'll use tapes and flashlights to attract, hear and perhaps see Screech and other owls. Wear warm clothes and footwear and bring something warm to drink. Powerful flashlights would be useful, also. Meet at commuter parking lot just off I-270, Urbana Exit, at 5:00 p.m. Snow/wind/poor weather date will be February 13. Limited to 10 people. For reservations and additional details, contact the leader, Gary Nelson, at 202-686-7062.

**Thursday, February 10**

**MEETING.** Montgomery. "Historical Decline and Recovery of the Hawaiian Crow" by National Zoo ornithologist Scott Derrickson. 7:30 p.m. at the Potomac Presbyterian Church, 10301 River Road, Potomac, MD. For further information, contact Linda Friedland at 301-983-2136 or by email at linnet@erols.com.

**MEETING.** Talbot. "Going Native: Plans for a 'Natural' Arboretum" by Ellie Altman from the Atkins Arboretum. Meet at 7:30 p.m. at the Crestar Bank basement meeting room, Goldsboro and Harrison Streets in Easton.

**Saturday, February 12**

**FIELD TRIP.** Baltimore. Cape Henlopen to Ocean City. Trip to Delaware coast and Ocean City in search of Scoters, Oldsquaw, Brant, Purple Sandpipers, Red-throated Loons, and Gannets. Eiders and Harlequin Ducks possible. Telescopes very useful. Meals bought on the road. Meet at 7:00 a.m. at Nursery Road - Hammonds Ferry Road Park & Ride at Beltway Exit 8. Optional meeting place: Cape May-Lewes Ferry parking lot at 10:00 a.m. For further information, contact the leader, Pete Webb, at 410-486-1217.

**FIELD TRIP.** Kent. Feeder watch at the Stotts' home. Meet at the Dollar General Store parking lot at the intersection of Rt. 213 and Spring Avenue, Chestertown at 8:30 a.m.

**FIELD TRIP.** Talbot. Winter rarities trip. Details TBA - contact a club officer or check the hotline.

**Tuesday, February 15**

**MEETING.** Allegany. Mike Chonko will talk about Decoys 7:00 p.m. at the Board of Education Building, 108 Washington St., Cumberland. For further information, contact Chuck Hager at 301-689-5344.

**Friday-Monday, February 18-21**

**FIELD TRIP.** Montgomery. Presidents' Birthday Observance Weekend (Joint trip with ANS), Delmarva Peninsula. Wilmington, DE to the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel. Winter waterfowl, songbirds; hopefully white-winged gulls, eiders, Harlequin Ducks and Great Cormorants. Reservations required. Full details (directions, motels) will appear in the late 1999/early 2000 issues of ANS Naturalist News. For further information, contact the leader, Paul DuMont, at 703-931-8994.

**Saturday-Monday, February 19-21**

**FIELD TRIP.** Anne Arundel. Kiptopeke Winter Weekend, Virginia for a variety of wintering birds. For further information, contact the leader, Peter Hanan at 410-721-2658.

**FIELD TRIP.** Carroll. President's Day Weekend at the Beach. Tour of Eastern Shore wildlife areas. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at Bombay Hook visitor's center. Limited accommodations. For further information, contact Laura Tarbell at 410-857-1109.

**FIELD TRIP.** Frederick. Presidents Weekend Trip to Southern Maryland or Eastern Shore, where the really rare birds are. So much to see, we need two leaders, Mike Welch (301-874-5828) and Wilbur Hersberger.

**Saturday, February 19**

**FIELD TRIP.** Baltimore. Patuxent Naval Air Station. Southern Maryland reservation-only trip for winter delights. Guaranteed to get lots of Horned Larks, Savannah Sparrows, Common Snipe, and a great variety of waterfowl. Barrow's Goldeneye, Lapland Longspur, and Snow Bunting likely. Limit 20 people, by reservation only. Call Pete Webb at 410-486-1217, or pwebb@bcpl.net, to reserve your space on this special trip. "Snow date" is February 26.

**Tuesday, February 22**

**MEETING.** Washington. Birding the Adirondacks will be Wilbur Hersberger's topic. The meeting will be at 7:30 p.m. at the Mt. Aetna Retreat & Nature Center. Call Janet Shields at 301-416-7109 for more information.

**Friday, February 25**

**FIELD TRIP.** Frederick. Timberdoodles at Audrey Carroll. Meet at New Market Shopping Center, Rt. 75 and 144 just North of I-70 at 5:30 p.m. Bring a flashlight.

**Saturday, February 26**

**FIELD TRIP.** Cecil. Eastern Neck NWR. Meet at 8:00 am at the Big Elk Mall Dunkin Doughnuts Parking Lot Area. Full Day. For further information, contact the leader, Parke John, at 410-287-6037.

**FIELD TRIP.** Montgomery. Wilmington, DE, locations. ½ to full day. Object of the trip will be to look for unusual gulls at Wilmington's fine gull concentration areas near the Delaware River. 2+ hours driving from DC. Start time 9 a.m. Another opportunity for Gull Workshop graduates. Reservations required no later than February 22. Essential to check with leader close to date for driving instructions and in case trip has to be canceled for some reason. Car pooling strongly encouraged. Limited to 12 people. Frank Rohrbacher, one of Delaware's top birders, will co-lead. For reservations and additional details, contact the leader, Mike Bowen, at 301-530-5764.

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**Wednesday, March 1**

MEETING. Carroll. "Eastern Australia and Papua New Guinea" by Dave Harvey. 7:30 p.m. at Carroll Community College, Westminster, MD. For more information, contact Laura Tarbell at 410-857-1109.

**Thursday, March 2**

MEETING. Frederick. Stauffer Miller brings us up to date on the Miller's excursions far afield. 7:30 p.m. at Frederick High School in the Music Room.

FIELD TRIP. Montgomery. McKee-Beshers WMA, ½ or full day. Wintering landbirds, some waterfowl. Part I: Meet at 7 a.m. at Seneca parking lot (end of Riley's Lock Rd.). Bird until around 1:30 p.m., then lunch in Poolesville. Part II: Bird from 3 p.m. until dark. Meet at 3 p.m. at Hughes Hollow Parking lot off River Rd. We'll bird the Hollow and Sycamore Landing, looking for landbirds, Barred Owl and wintering ducks, then (we hope!) finish with a Woodcock display at dusk. Bring folding chair if you want and 'scope to scan river. Reservations required for full or half day. For further information, contact the leader, Jim Green, at (301) 208-2393.

**Friday, March 3**

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING. Anne Arundel. "MOS Records Committee." 8:00 p.m. at the DNR Conference Room, Tawes Building, corner of Taylor Avenue and Rowe Boulevard, Annapolis.

**Saturday, March 4**

FIELD TRIP. Frederick. Conowingo Dam for gulls, eagles. TURKEY POINT for wintering woodland birds and ducks. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Culler Lake Boathouse (2<sup>nd</sup> Street just west of College Terrace). For further information, contact Marsha Balestri at 301-473-5098.

**Sunday, March 5**

FIELD TRIP. Montgomery. Black Hill Regional Park. Waterfowl, land birds. Meet at the visitor center at 8:00 a.m. Bring scope and snacks. For further information, contact the leader, Rob Gibbs, at 301-253-6903.

**Tuesday, March 7**

ANNUAL MEETING. Baltimore. "Midway Island, One of the Newest Birding Destinations" by Daphne Gemmill. 7:30 p.m. at Cylburn Mansion.

**Thursday, March 9**

MEETING. Talbot. "Birds of the Galapagos with Notes on Bird Photography" by Kent Minichiello. Meet at 7:30 p.m. at the Crestar Bank basement meeting room, Goldsboro and Harrison Streets in Easton.

**Saturday, March 11**

FIELD TRIP. Baltimore. Cromwell Valley Park Join Jim Meyers (410-435-2008) with the Wild Bird Center people in a walk through the diverse habitats of the Park. Expect to find a variety of resident and early migrant birds. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the "Willow Grove Farm" Information Kiosk in the park off Cromwell Bridge Road 1.5 miles north of I-695 Beltway exit 29A. For further information, contact Ray at the Wild Bird Center at 410-666-4550.

FIELD TRIP. Carroll. Owling at Hugg-Thomas WMA. Night trip to hear and possibly see Barred, Great Horned and Eastern Screech Owl. Meet 8:00 p.m. at the parking lot on Forsythe Road. For more information, contact Mark Hoffman at 410-549-3598.

FIELD TRIP. Cecil. Waterfowl - Bombay Hook NWR. Meet at 7:00 am at the Big Elk Mall Dunkin Doughnuts Parking Lot Area. Full Day. For further information, contact the leader, Sean McCandless, at 410-392-3407.

**Sunday, March 12**

FIELD TRIP. Talbot. Blackwater NWR. Meet at 7:00 a.m. at the parking lot in front of the Acme in the Tred Avon Shopping Center in Easton. For further information contact the leaders, Levin Willey or Roger Stone at 410-770-9636.

**Tuesday, March 14**

MEETING. Kent. "Neotropical Bird Migration" by Chan Robbins. 7:30 p.m. at the Kent County Library, Chestertown. For more information, contact Gail Register at 410-778-9367.

**Thursday, March 16**

FIELD TRIP. Baltimore. Woodcock at Cromwell Valley Park. Join Jim Meyers (410-435-2008) at 6:30 p.m. in this first of three Thursday evening walks in search of Woodcock, possible Great Horned Owl, and other delights. For further information, call Georgia McDonald at 410-821-6956.

**Saturday, March 18**

FIELD TRIP. Baltimore. Middle Creek WMA. Visit this major gathering place for Snow Geese and other waterfowl north of Lancaster PA. There is also an excellent display of mounted birds in its visitor center. Note: Trip may end up going elsewhere if Middle Creek's reservoir is frozen over. Meet at 8:00 a.m. For further information, contact the leader, Steve Sanford, at 410-922-5103 or by e-mail at [tanager@bcpl.net](mailto:tanager@bcpl.net).

FIELD TRIP. Frederick. Sandy Point State Park and environs for Franklin's Gull, Snow Bunting and other winter visitors. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Culler Lake Boathouse (2<sup>nd</sup> Street just west of College Terrace). For further information, contact Lois Kauffman at 301-845-6690.

FIELD TRIP. Montgomery. Jug Bay. (Joint trip with ANS) Highlights may include Rusty Blackbird, migrating Common Snipe and courtship display of Osprey. Meet at 8:00 a.m. Reservations required. For further information and driving instructions, contact the leader, Paul DuMont, at 703-931-8994.

**Sunday, March 19**

FIELD TRIP. Anne Arundel. Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, Anne Arundel County. Wintering woodland birds and waterfowl. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Parole Park & Ride lot located off Harry Truman Parkway. For further information, contact the leader, Wafi Rains, at 410-573-0352.

FIELD TRIP. Baltimore. Cylburn Self-guided Walk. Meet 8:30 a.m. at the front porch of Cylburn Mansion. First in a series of casual self-guided spring walks at one of Baltimore's birding hot spots.

FIELD TRIP. Carroll. Bird Walk at the National Zoo. You might not be able to count these on your Maryland list, but exotic species abound, and just as much fun as any of our favorite birding spots! Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Park & Ride at Rt. 32 and I-70. For more information, contact the leader, Bob Ringler, at 410-549-6031.

FIELD TRIP. Talbot. Oxford and vicinity. Meet at 7:00 a.m. at the parking lot in front of the Acme in the Tred Avon Shopping Center in Easton. For further information contact the leader, Les Coble, at 410-820-6165.

*(continued at top of next page)*



**Tuesday, March 21**

**MEETING.** Allegany. Bruce Taliaferro and Vicki Teets will talk about compiling their book, *Mammals of Western Maryland*. 7:00 p.m. at the Board of Education Building, 108 Washington St., Cumberland. For further information, contact Chuck Hager at 301-689-5344.

**FIELD TRIP.** Baltimore. Lake Roland. First in a series of weekly walks to follow the progress of spring migration. Two or three hours and miles of walking, early departure possible. Some uneven terrain and steep dikes optional at far end. Spring migrant songbirds. Yellow-crowned Night-Herons possible after March. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at the footbridge in Robert E. Lee Park. For further information, contact the leader, Adelaide Rackemann, at 410-823-4709.

**Thursday, March 23**

**FIELD TRIP.** Baltimore. Woodcock at Cromwell Valley Park. Join Jim Meyers (410-435-2008) at 6:30 p.m. in this second of three Thursday evening walks in search of Woodcock, possible Great Horned Owl, and other delights. For further information, call Georgia McDonald at 410-821-6956.

**Saturday, March 25**

**FIELD TRIP.** Baltimore. Cromwell Valley Park Join Jim Meyers (410-435-2008) with the Wild Bird Center people in a walk through the diverse habitats of the Park. Expect to find a variety of resident and early migrant birds. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the "Willow Grove Farm" Information Kiosk in the park off Cromwell Bridge Road 1.5 miles north of I-695 Beltway exit 29A. For further information, contact Ray at the Wild Bird Center at 410-666-4550.

**Sunday, March 26**

**FIELD TRIP.** Anne Arundel. Baltimore Zoo, Baltimore County for late winter birds. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at the Severna Park Park & Ride lot located on the corner of Jones Station Road and Ritchie Highway. For further information, contact the leader, Doug Forsell, at 410-626-8486.

**FIELD TRIP.** Baltimore. Centennial Lake, Columbia. Morning walk for early waterfowl and other early migrants and lingering winter residents. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the tennis courts at Centennial Lake. For further information, contact the leader, Burton Alexander, at 410-381-5574.

**FIELD TRIP.** Baltimore. Cylburn Self-guided Walk. Meet 8:30 a.m. at the front porch of Cylburn Mansion.

**FIELD TRIP.** Talbot. Easton Wastewater Treatment Facility. Meet at 7:00 a.m. at the parking lot in front of the Acme in the Tred Avon Shopping Center in Easton. For further information contact the leader, Dick Kleen, at 410-745-5482.

**Tuesday, March 28**

**FIELD TRIP.** Baltimore. Lake Roland. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at the footbridge in Robert E. Lee Park. For further information, contact the leader, Chris Manning, at 410-668-8713.

**Thursday, March 30**

**FIELD TRIP.** Baltimore. Woodcock at Cromwell Valley Park. Join Jim Meyers (410-435-2008) at 6:30 p.m. in this third of three Thursday evening walks in search of Woodcock, possible Great Horned Owl, and other delights. For further information, call Georgia McDonald at 410-821-6956.

## Chapter Chatter

(continued from page 3, column 3)

mainly meant to inform new members of the various chapter activities and to encourage them by means of a questionnaire to get involved by serving on a committee, etc. Walks for new birders are marked on the schedule with "an egg with legs." The Howard Chapter has been emphasizing in newspaper announcements of bird walks that new birders are welcomed. This encouragement has resulted in a number of new faces at regularly scheduled walks. In addition, Howard's newsletter, "The Goldfinch," now has a "Beginner's Corner" article. In the most recent edition Bonnie Ott discussed choosing a field guide. Cecil has been on an active and successful campaign to recruit new birders. Recently, they have been concentrating on orientation and are making sure that each new member receives a packet of the current newsletter, a county checklist, and a field trip schedule.

**Ellicott City Fire Destroys Nature Nook**—In the recent Ellicott City fire, long-time Howard MOS members, Don and Jan Randle, lost their unique store, the "Nature Nook," which featured books, carvings, artwork, bird feeders, rocks and minerals, and any other item connected with nature. Rare out-of-print books such as Brown & Brown's "Herbaceous Plants of Maryland" were burned. Birders depended on the "Nature Nook" for esoteric field guides, books, and tapes and appreciated a generous discount for MOS members. The Randles and their staff had created such a warm and welcoming niche shop that they

have been receiving sympathy cards and calls from their former customers. Don and Jan got their start as volunteers who managed the Howard Chapter's "book store". They built on the knowledge and expertise they gained from this position to open the "Nature Nook." The Chapter provides books for members at very reasonable cost. Ann Marie Raterman, the chapter's current book store manager, displays the current stock at Chapter meetings and special events and orders special requests by members.

**Montgomery Recognizes Those Who Serve**—The Montgomery saluted members who do the sometimes unrecognized jobs. "Chair" men who orchestrate setting up and putting away chairs and tables for meetings this fall were Dave Winer, Bob Wasmer, Hugh Mahanes, and Dan Eberly. The Treasurer Howard Lefkowitz and the annual auditors Bill Kulp and Ann Lucy are often silent volunteer laborers. Doris Brody is the chief of the mailing crew for the Chapter's newsletter, "The Chat."

**Caroline Chapter Cleans Up**—Caroline members staged a clean up at the Myrtle Simon Pelot Sanctuary that garnered a pickup load of trash including tires, clothes, shoes, and one car muffler. In addition, numerous glass bottles and soda cans were saved for recycling. Dottie Mumford, MOS sanctuary committee chair, was joined by Chris

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## Chapter Chatter

(continued from page 10, column 2)

Lawrence, Mark Grande, Bill Gardner, Steve Westre, Bill Scudder, Danny Poet, Bob Fletcher, and Wanda Cole.

**Scholarship Winner Was A Happy Camper**—Barbara Holloman (Montgomery Chapter), a 1999 MOS scholarship winner, reported in Montgomery's "The Chat" that she had "a really wonderful experience, in terms of both birds and ecology," at the National Audubon Society Ornithology Camp on Hog Island in Muscongus Bay, Maine. She was joined at that camp by four other scholarship winners: Mark Scallion (Talbot Chapter), Susanna Engvall (Baltimore Chapter), Chuck Hager (Allegany Chapter), and Anne McKimmie (So. Md. Audubon Society). The "Maryland Five" and the 50 other adult campers began each day with an early morning bird/nature walk, followed by a breakfast prepared by a gourmet chef, and then a half- or full-day field trip plus workshops. The camp leader, Steve Kress, founded the Puffin Project, a 26 year effort to reestablish Puffins in Maine. After dinner they had mini-workshops on topics such as bird brains, color phases, migration, adaptation, and bird song. Each evening a staff member presented a major birding topic. Each day the amateur sleuths confronted a Mystery of the Day, a set of cryptic bird skulls, skins, mislabeled bird prints, or photos, in an exercise designed to encourage using reference books, logic, and knowledge to solve the riddle. Barbara added to her life list: Atlantic Puffins, of course, plus Black Guillemot, and Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow. She enjoyed seeing nesting Black-throated Green, Magnolia, and Yellow-rumped Warblers, Golden-crowned Kinglets and Red-breasted Nuthatches, birds that are Maryland tourists.

**Jug Bay Retirees Busy in Kestrel Haven**—John and Sue Gregoire migrated from Maryland to the Finger Lakes area of New York after John's retirement from Naval Intelligence in 1985. They established the Kestrel Haven Avian Migration Observatory in 1986, a small wildlife refuge and migratory banding station active in the April/May period and from mid-July through mid-November. John was a founder of the Jug Bay Chapter and served as its first president; Sue was the first Jug Bay newsletter editor. Since 1986, they have banded over 35,000 birds of 124 species. Their most unusual encounters have been with three Gambell's White Crowned Sparrows and a local breeding of Lincoln's Sparrow. The Gambell's were the 2<sup>nd</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup> documented state records and the breeding evidence of Lincoln's was the only Eastern flyway evidence outside the Adirondacks. This fall has been amazing and record-setting in all categories. By late November they had banded over 3500 birds (800 more than the record year) of 94 species and found 109 previously banded birds. The highlight came in late October with an inundation of Black-capped Chickadees. They have banded more BCCHs than they had in the aggregate over the last 13 years. John predicts many BCCHs in Maryland this winter. John and Sue operate the station without assistance and report many days of chickadee nibbled fingers grabbing quick bites of peanut butter sandwiches. The Gregoires welcome MOS visitors, friendship, and help. They can be reached at the Kestrel Haven Avian Migratory Observatory, 5373 Fitzgerald Rd., Burdett, NY 14818-9626; phone 607-546-2169; E-mail khmo@att.net

**The Loon Over the Susquehanna - Part II**—Mark Hoffman of the Carroll Chapter set out with Rick Blom and a faithful friend and John boat-owner, Ron Norris to see the famed Pacific Loon on the Susquehanna. It could be his state bird No. 376. The elusive bird had stayed away from the more convenient Cecil County viewing locations on Mark's first two land-bound tries. The amphibious team (reinforced by Ron's trusty black lab) found the bird in mid-

Susquehanna on the Cecil County side. Although the loon was wary, the undaunted sailors were able to get as close as 30 yards. Gradually the bird drifted toward the Harford side. Mark documented this successful naval engagement with 3 plus rolls of films and plans to share the best in a talk on "Rare Birds of Maryland" with the Howard Chapter on February 10. (See calendar.)

**Caroline Members Bird Far Afield**—Danny Poet and Wanda Cole birded in Wisconsin and Minnesota in late September and early October. Danny spotted four life birds: Harris Sparrow, Gray Jay, Sharp-tailed Grouse, and Ruffed Grouse. They watched an immature Ring-billed Gull land in a Mountain Ash, pluck the fruit, and eat it. Danny reports it was his first time to see any gull land in a tree, much less eat fruit. The bird kept its wings opened and flapping for balance. They also spotted a lone black bear. Joyce and Frank Zeigler traveled to Church Hill, Manitoba, Canada, where they saw polar bears, Arctic fox, hundreds of Snow Buntings, Snowy Owls, and Common Eiders.

**Baltimore Bird Club Buys Ducks and Swans**—The Baltimore Chapter contributed money to the Horsehead Wetlands Center to buy some birds for a new diving duck aviary. The purchases included Ring-necked Ducks, Ruddy Ducks, Redheads, Canvasback, Brant, and Tundra Swans. The contribution was made possible by a grant from the Dorothy Blake Martin Fund, a fund which supports conservation and ornithology. Karen Morley, chair of the committee for this fund, Terry Ross, chapter president, and Roberta Ross, membership secretary, attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony and were favorably impressed with the facility and its collection of North American waterfowl. The Horsehead Wetlands Center is in Grasonville, Queen Anne's County, eight miles from the Kent Narrows Bridge off Rt. 18. It is owned by a private non-profit organization dedicated to conservation and stewardship of wildfowl and wetlands through education and research. The Center is a living field guide to the species typical to the area, permitting close observation in a way impossible to achieve through binoculars. The Center has 500 acres of diverse habitat accessible by trails and boardwalks. Decoy painting classes, a duck carving club, lectures and field trips are offered. Phone 410-827-6694 for information.

**Tri-County Members in Color**—The Sunday, October 10, 1999 Washington Post featured an article on birding in Prince George's County complete with color pictures of Greg Kearns, Patuxent River Park naturalist and frequent MOS chapter speaker, and Patsy Decker and Debbie Blake of the Tri-County Club. Greg treated 15 birders to a glimpse into the freshwater marshes of Jug Bay to see Sora and Virginia Rails. Greg and his partner, G. Michael Haramis, have been attaching radio transmitters attached to rails to follow their migration patterns. Unfortunately this year, rice plants in the marsh withered during the drought and then were flooded by Hurricane Floyd. Only 270 birds were captured by October this year, compared to 1,000 last year.

**Cecil Chapter Quilt**—The Delaware Art Museum invited the Cecil Bird Club to participate in their Community Quilt Project. The Museum assembled some 250 quilt squares, each representing a local non-profit club or organization. The exhibit was accompanied by a notebook with a page for each group represented, giving club information and an explanation for the artistic interpretation of the square. After the quilt is displayed in the Art Museum, it will be moved to the Gallery at the Mellon Bank Building through January 2000. Mikki Senn crafted the Cecil Chapter's square with the advice of Mary Kramer of the Cecil County Quilters.



## MOS Activities January - March, 2000

### Friday-Monday, December 31-January 3

**FIELD TRIP.** Carroll. What better way to ring in the new year! Come spend all or part of the long holiday weekend birding the Eastern Shore. Be sure to pack warm clothing as we're aiming to do some birding at the Chesapeake Bay Tunnel where the winds are strong this time of year. Meet 9:00 a.m. at the visitor's center at Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge. Limited accommodations. For more information, contact Laura Tarbell at 410-857-1109.

### Thursday, January 6

**MEETING.** Frederick. Sights & Sounds of Ferd's Bog near Old Forge NY. Enjoy Wilbur Hershberger's photography and recordings. 7:30 p.m. at Frederick High School in the Music Room.

### Friday, January 7

**MEETING.** Anne Arundel. "Northeastern Australia" by Greg Kerns. 8:00 p.m. at the DNR Conference Room, Tawes Building, corner of Taylor Avenue and Rowe Boulevard, Annapolis.

### Saturday, January 8

**FIELD TRIP.** Anne Arundel. Lakes of Howard County for winter waterfowl. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Severna Park Park & Ride lot located on the corner of Jones Station Road and Ritchie Highway. For further information, contact the leader, Larry Zoller, at 410-647-9354.

**HOLIDAY PARTY.** Carroll. Our annual party is here again & we always have a good time at the Yingling residence! 8:00 p.m. til... For more information, contact Sue Yingling at 410-876-8211.

**FIELD TRIP.** Montgomery. Gull Workshop at Patuxent Research Refuge. A morning 2-hour, concentrated workshop with multiple slides, conducted by Paul Pisano and Mike Bowen, will be followed by an opportunity to practice i.d. skills on the many gulls usually to be found on the refuge premises. To sign up, contact Linda Friedland, at 301-983-2136

**FIELD TRIP.** Talbot. Caroline County fields for winter finches and raptors. Meet at 7:00 a.m. at the parking lot in front of the Acme in the Tred Avon Shopping Center in Easton. For further information contact the leaders, Danny Poet and Jan Reese, at 410-745-2875.

### Sunday, January 9

**MEETING.** Baltimore. Covered Dish Supper at 5:30 p.m.. "Bird Watching Off the Beaten Track - New Britain, Reunion and More" with world traveling McCormick Spice Company purchase agent and birder Hank Kaestner. For your dish assignment, register by Thursday, Jan 6 with Carolyn Webb at 410-486-1217.

**FIELD TRIP.** Kent. Feeder watch at Pat Wilson's home. Meet at the Dollar General Store parking lot at the intersection of Rt. 213 and Spring Avenue, Chestertown at 8:30 a.m.

**FIELD TRIP.** Montgomery. Ducks Unlimited! A visit to Black Hill Regional Park, predictably excellent for wintering waterfowl, and good also for raptors, finches, and possible red-headed woodpeckers. Meet at 9:00 a.m. in front of the park visitor center. Bring a snack and a scope. Call the leader to determine trip status in the event of inclement weather. For further information, contact the leader, Howard Elitzak, at 703-575-8418.

(continued on page 7, column 1)

The copy deadline for the March/April issue of the Yellowthroat is January 25 for chapter activities and February 1 for all other submissions.

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